The Matchstick Game

Kit contains:

- 1 game mat
- 20 “matchsticks”

You will need: your brain.

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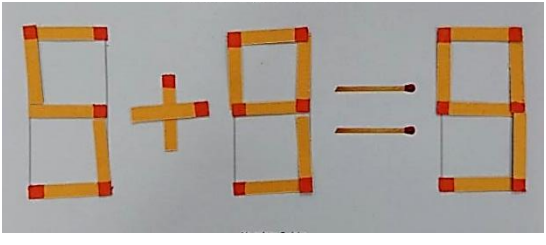
Matchstick puzzles, also known as the Matchstick Game, are a type of brain teaser. A set of matchsticks—or in our case, strips of paper that look like matches—are arranged in a starting configuration. The player must move a specified number of matchsticks to create a second, goal, configuration.

ARITHMETIC PUZZLES

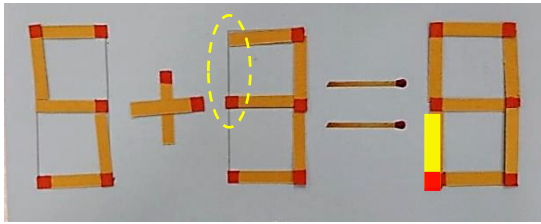
In this version of the game, the goal is to move ONE matchstick to make an incorrect equation true.

Example: 5 + 9 = 9



Place matchsticks on the mat to form the numbers and the plus sign.

This isn't right! 5 + 9 ≠ 9. How can we fix this? If we remove one match, we can turn the first 9 into a 3. If we add one match, we can turn the second 9 into an 8.



Does 5 + 3 = 8? Yes! We've solved the puzzle.

Here are some more addition and subtraction puzzles for you to solve:

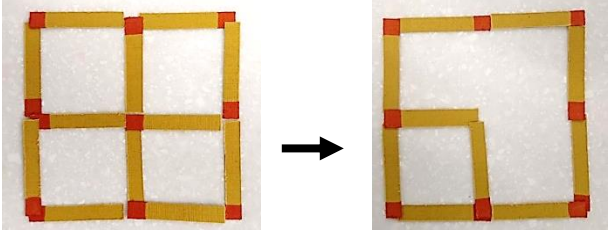
0 + 3 = 2	7 + 7 = 0
6 + 4 = 4	1 + 1 = 3
5 + 7 = 2	9 – 5 = 9
9 – 8 = 5	1 + 2 = 5
1 + 3 = 6	5 – 6 = 4

(**Hint:** You can move a matchstick to turn a plus sign into a minus sign.)

MATCHSTICK PICTURE PUZZLES

The reverse side of your Matchstick Game mat has two more puzzles for you. The gray outlines show the starting positions for your matchsticks. Move (or remove) the number of matchsticks indicated to solve the puzzles.

Example: Remove 2 matchsticks to leave 2 squares.



In this example, we start out with 5 squares: 4 inner squares and the big outer square. When we take away 2 matchsticks, we are left with just 1 inner square and the big outer square.